

# WALKYTALK

## **Biography of Jodi Davis, active mother of three and spokesperson for walking and healthy habits**

Did you know that four of every 10 people in the state of Michigan are obese? Until five years ago, I was one of them.

My parents always told me I was beautiful the way I was. Mom tried to help me lose weight. Other girls looked forward to the annual back-to-school shopping trip, but I always dreaded it. One year, I wore my favorite navy-blue hooded sweatshirt to school every day as a cover-up to hide the extra pounds.

By my early 30s, I was on my way to topping 300 pounds. I tried low-fat, low-carb — you name it, I tried it — and nothing worked. I always ended up feeling starved, deprived and eating more to make up for it. Maybe I was just meant to be fat. For so many years, that's what I thought.

Like most moms, I put the welfare of everyone else in the family first and made very little “me time.” Fast food was the norm in our house for lunch, and dinners often included fattening pasta and potato dishes. I tried to look on the bright side. My husband and kids loved me. My house was beautiful. I had many friends and a wonderful life. I decided being big was okay. Big was who I was. I loved my family and our life, but when I looked in the mirror, I didn't like me.

If there's one thing that most overweight people have in common, it's denial. I would never admit to being obese, even when my doctor would try to talk to me about my weight.

I knew that obese people are often unhealthy. But I was different. I stayed active. I had great blood pressure — okay, maybe a few very slight heart palpitations here and there.

And then a relative died of weight-related problems. She was just a few years older than me, and she had a son a few years older than my eldest. When I went to the funeral and saw her son standing by her casket, without a mom, I thought, “That could be my kids!”

It was too late for her, but it wasn't too late for me. I started my diet on Jan. 22, 2001 and reached my goal weight on May 23, 2002. I lost 162 pounds the old-fashioned way, through a combination of healthier eating and walking. No gimmicks, surgery or expensive programs.

Hard to believe, but it's been five years since I reached my goal weight. After all those years of trying and failing, I've found a healthy lifestyle that works for me. Now I'm on a mission to inspire others to take charge of their health.

**Read the rest of my story and blog with me at [WalkyTalk.com](http://WalkyTalk.com).**



*Jodi Davis and her walking partner Izzy*